Meeting of Tobacco Board

1812. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a formal and notified meeting of the Tobacco Board was held in July, 1994 in Guntur;

(b) if so, what were the major items on the agenda that were discussed; and

(c) what are the details thereof; including any recommendations made at this meeting which would have a bearing on any anti-tobacco proposals?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Major items on the agenda were annual accounts & administrative reports and the new schemes to be implemented by the Board during 1994-95, all of which were approved. As regards the proposed legislation by the Ministry of Health restricting tobacco use and advertisement, the Board reiterated its earlier recommendation that the matter needed a thorough re-examination of the various aspects of the matter. The size of the next crop for Andhra Pradesh was also debated but no final view was taken.

Progress on recommendations of Tobacco Board meeting

1813. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 7371 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 13th June, 1994 and state:

(a) whether any significant progress has been made on any recommendations considered at the Tobacco Board meeting held in the month of May, 1994;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to implement the decisions of this meeting?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The apprehensions expressed by the trade & industry with regard to the restrictive legislation have been taken note of by the Government. The views of the Tabacco Board have been conveyed to the Ministry of Health for due consideration. The overall decision will be taken so as to promote the larger public interest.

Scheme for retention of Tobacco Board Registration

1814. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme under Tobacco Board consideration to allow farmers to retain their Tobacco Board registartion if they do not cultivate tobacco for two consecutive years; and

(b) if so, what are the present rules of Tobacco Board which should be observed by tobacco farmers to maintain their registration?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The registration of growers is made on the basis of the estimated crop size, the previous experience of the applicant in growing virginia tobacco, his track record in clearance of Tobacco Board dues and with the objective of giving priority to such growers who have invested heavily in infrastructure facilities like barns. In the current scenario, the possibility of registering growers who have discontinued cultivation is very unlikely.

Workers engaged in Tobacco Economy in Andhra Pradesh

1815. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of workers engaged in the tobacco economy in Andhra Pradesh as estimated by Tobacco Board;